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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 9, 2010

Brockton launches program to assist small businesses
Kick-off event held November 9th

Brockton – Mayor Linda M. Balzotti was joined by representatives of the Metro South Chamber of Commerce, Brockton Redevelopment Authority, Self Help Inc. (CDC), and the Campello, Downtown, and Montello business associations to celebrate the official launch of the Brockton 21st Century Corporation Small Business Program on Tuesday, Nov. 9th

"This program will help kick start Brockton's economic engine," said Mayor Balzotti. "Providing assistance to small businesses not only helps those already here, but makes the city more attractive to business-owners looking to locate a business in the area."

The goal of the program will be to provide Brockton's small businesses with the necessary resources and technical assistance to foster both prosperity and sustainability.

The consulting contract was awarded to OnPoint Coaching. John Lloyd, the company's principal, will serve in a part-time position funded through the Brockton 21st Century Corporation. Lloyd will have on-site office hours in the B21 offices at 50 School St., from 8:30 a.m. to noon Tuesdays and Thursdays.

"Establishing this program meets an unmet need in our community," said Mary Waldron, Executive Director of the Brockton 21st Century Corporation.

A Brockton resident, Lloyd has nine years of business experience in the private sector and has owned OnPoint Coaching since 2008. The firm focuses on advising clients in project management, market research, web site development, public relations, businesses development, event planning, and marketing.

"Our goal with this program is to provide the appropriate support, resources, and direction to the small business in the community for growth and vitality," said Lloyd.

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Small business owners will receive assistance through monthly training sessions focused on addressing the challenges and opportunities small businesses face as well as providing solutions and guidance. An analysis of an existing small business database will be done, as well as a needs assessment of what resources Brockton's small businesses need.

The Small Business Program will also provide direct and indirect technical assistance to new and/or existing businesses seeking this type of service.

In addition to this, Lloyd will attend local, state, and federal meetings focusing on small business; and assist the Brockton 21st Century Corporation to establish monthly meetings with local, state, and federal resources including: the Small Business Association; the Center for Entrepreneurship at Bridgewater State University; Massasoit Community College; Stonehill College, SEED Corporation, the Metro South Chamber of Commerce, SCORE, and more.

The Small Business Program will also identify, research, and apply for targeted grants to help enhance Brockton's existing small business resources. A welcome package for newly formed businesses will also be created and distributed.

The development of a micro-loan program for small businesses and a post-finance technical assistance program aimed at recently funded businesses in the Brockton area is also planned.

The Small Business Program will also review and update an existing Navigating Guide with input from relevant city departments. In the few weeks that Lloyd has been on board, accomplishments already include a revised business guide identifying resources for Brockton small businesses. This guide was translated by Jair Martins, a BSU grade student interning at Brockton 21st Century Corporation.

Lloyd also plans to conduct a quarterly review and assessment of the small business program for any adjustments that may needed.

In addition to the launching the Small Business Program, a Brockton Redevelopment Authority announced the award of a $40,000 to Self Help, Inc. Funding for the grant came from federal Community Development Block Grant dollars.

The award will be directed to Self Help's Business Technical Assistance Program – a six session course for business owners and those interested in starting their own business.

"The Brockton Redevelopment Authority is proud to be partnering with Self Help Incorporated to bring the Business Technical Assistance Program to Brockton," said Anne Marie Belrose, interim Executive Director of the BRA. "This new and innovative program is designed to foster entrepreneurship in a competitive and dynamic way."

Each of the six sessions will be two hours long and will require six months to complete. The class size will be limited to 20 participants initially.

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"While at least 20 people will benefit from coursework in developing a business plan, the entrepreneur with the greatest likelihood of success will benefit from a grant to establish and create a sustainable business in downtown Brockton," said Belrose. "With the Mayor's support, we are in lockstep with Self Help, the Brockton 21st Century Corporation, SCORE, the Metro South Chamber of Commerce and others to create new opportunities for our residents"

The six classes, led by Glen Ohlund will cover: starting a new business, crafting a business plan; an executive summary, ownership structure, business descriptions; market analysis, promotion, advertising, management and hiring; financing your business, locating your business, strategic planning and execution; pulling it all together, finalizing work on your plan; and oral presentations to class.

Of the 20 business plans submitted by participants, one will be selected for a small business grant, in the form of a rent subsidy that will allow the business owner free rent in a downtown Brockton commercial space for one year. The estimated value of the subsidy is $9,000.

For more information about the Small Business Program, contact Mary Waldron at (508) 586-0021. For more information, or to enroll in the Self Help Inc. Business Technical Assistance Program, call Glen Ohlund at (508) 588-4049, ext. 119.

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